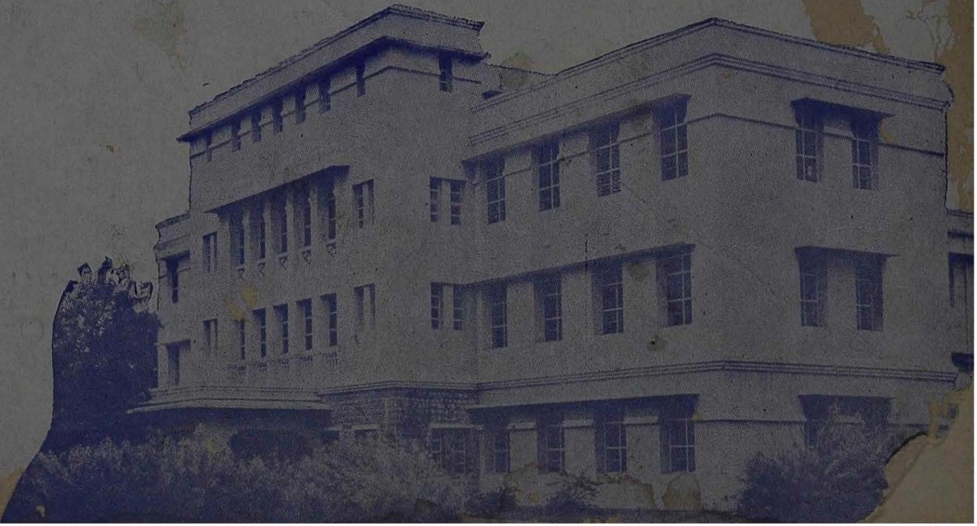
89

Know your

CONNEMARA (STATE CENTRAL) PUBLIC LIBRARY

MADRAS-8



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GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
MADRAS-8

CONNEMARA (STATE CENTRAL) PUBLIC LIBRARY, MADRAS.

1 OBJECTIVES

11 *Governor speaks*

"Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to say that it has been for a long time, the wish of my collegues and myself to see a free public library established in Madras ; we have recognised it for a long time as one of the most urgent wants of the educated people of this Presidency Town. In all populous places a free public library is a very great boon, and I am quite sure that where a great number of students and educated natives of India have not got the means of providing themselves with the books that one needed for their study, in their business, a want of this kind is very deeply felt. I trust that this want will be supplied by the free public library of the building of which I am now going to lay the foundation stone.

I heard it very often said that one of the reasons why our students who have distinguished themselves in minor degrees and in minor stations of life, literature, arts and science, do not come to attain the higher degree of the Master of Arts and other degrees of that character, is that they cannot afford to buy the books to enable them to complete their study. I hope, therefore, that in

this library those books will be found and also books of various kinds which shall enable them to study in the higher branches of literature and science. But beyond all this, I hope that there will be a free public library and that young men and old men, possibly ladies, may come here and enjoy the pleasures of literature and reading for its own sake ".

The objectives of the library was thus outlined by Lord Connemara—the then Governor of Madras during 1886-1890—while laying the foundation stone for the Connemara Public Library on 22nd March, 1890.

12 *Name*

The library so founded was named after him to perpetuate his memory in Madras in recognition of his efforts for the purpose as does the Mayo College that of his Viceroy brother at Lahore.

2 BUILDINGS

21 *Original structure*

Designed by H. Irvin, the then consulting Architect to the Government of Madras, the Connemara Public Library was constructed as a semi-circle end oblong building in Anglo-Italian style. It is a magnificient hall with a splendid reading room and beautiful teakwood book shelves. Its ceiling is pretty to look at. The roof is truncated semi-circle. The truncated top has a wooden ceiling. But the two curved sides are made of coloured glass pieces artistically cemented to one

another. Ornamental acanthus leaves and flowers adorn the pillers, windows and bookshelves. The flooring is done with marble slabs brought from Krishna District (Andhra Pradesh) through the Buckingham Canal, in boats.

22 *Additional Structure*

In order to cope with the expected inflow of books and increasing visitors who would visit in consequence of the new Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948, a mezzanine teakwood flooring was added in 1952 at a cost of Rs. 1,30,000 for accommodating readers. The ground floor thus released was provided with steel racks at a cost of Rs. 30,000 to accommodate books.

23 *Present accommodation*

So in this way having about 20,080 feet of shelving space and about 27,000 sq. feet of floor space, it accommodates about 250 readers at a time in its reading room and 2,44,383 volumes on its shelves on 31-3-73.

24 *New additional building*

Knowing the rapid inflow of a large number of books, periodicals and newspapers under the provision of the Delivery of Books Act, the Government have ordered the construction of an additional block with 50,000 sq. feet of space which will cost about Rs. 12·7 lakhs including the financial assistance of the Government of India to the extent of 2/3 of the cost.

25 *Details of the new building*

The T shaped three storeyed building constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 12·7 lakhs occupies 1,424 Squre metre (15,326 sq. ft.) of plinth area. The total floor area is 4,158 sq. metre (44,763 sq. ft.) while the actual carpet area is 3,738 sq. metres (40,233 sq. ft.).

The consumption of steel and cement is 155 Metric Tonnes and 700 Metric Tonnes respectiuely.

Enough lighting and ventilation arrengements are made with 249 light points, 137 fan points, 209 windows and 40 door openings.

3 GROWTH

31 *An adjunct*

The library was opened for the public from 14th April 1896 though the formal opening ceremony by the Governor Sir Arthur Elibank Havelock took place only on 5th December 1896 as an adjunct to the Government Museum under the control of the Superintendent of the Government Museum.

32 *Tenants*

321 *Invitation.*—Lord Connemara extended an invitation during his speech on 23rd March 1890 to the libraries controlled by different bodies to occupy some space in the portion of the

proposed library to help the public as well as the libraries which were in need of some space. This was uitlised by more than one institution.

322 *Madras Literary Society Library.*—In that way the Madras Literary Society Library was the first to function in the Southern half of the long hall inside the library untill it was shifted to its present buildings in the College Road in Nungambakkam in 1905.

323 *Madras University Library*—The Madras University Library occupied the space vacated by the Madras Literary Society Library and functioned there until 1928 when it moved into the new buildings of the University at Chepauk.

33 *Full time Librarian*

However with the increasing use and work of the library, a full time post of librarian came into existence on 9th September 1929 with Sri R. Janardhanam Naidu as the first full time Librarian. The Connemara Public Library was thus, for the first time in its history, free to develop under the guidence of a full time librarian. The library staff was entirely separated from the Museum staff n 1930 so as to admit of the Librarian taking full control of it.

34 *Independent Institution*

With effect from April 1, 1939, the library became as an Independent Institution presided over by the Librarian himself under the direct control of the Government.

35 *State Central Library*

It became the State Central Library with effect from April 1, 1950 under the control of the Director of Public Instruction who is the ex-officio Director of Public Libraries under the provision of the Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948.

36 *UNESCO Associated Library Project*

In 1955 the Connemara Public Library was accepted as an Unesco Associated Library Project. Accordingly it became a depository for publications of the United Nations Organisations and its specialised agencies and organisations.

37 *Depository under the Delivery of Books Act*

It was declared as one of the three public libraries with effect from September 10, 1955, which will get a copy of all materials published in India on or after 20th May, 1954 under the Delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Act of 1954, as amended.

38 *UNESCO Information Centre*

It also serves as the Unesco Information Centre with effect from September 15, 1965.

39 *Institute of Library Science*

An Institute of Library Science was added as one of the wings with effect from 21st March 1966 to train the untrained librarians working under the Local Library Authorities in the State.

4 COLLECTIONS

41 *Poorly furnished*

" We have a magnificient hall, a splendid reading room and beautiful book-shelves ; but I regret to say the book-shelves are at present but poorly furnished. They contain a useful reference and sceentific library which has been transferred from the old museum library ; also documents and other papers which have been presented by the Secretariat; but beyond this, I believe, the shelves are empty "—Thus observed Sir Arthur Havlock, the then Governor of Madras in the course of his opening speech on Dcember 5, 1896 regarding the position of collections of reading materials in the library.

42 *Slow development*

However the collections were slowly augmented by the books and periodicals purchased for the use of the Government Museum from the Government funds and the back volumes of periodicals received under exchange and gratis.

43 *Dhanakoti Collection*

Rao Bahadur Arcot Dhanakoti Mudaliar made a donation of Rs. 20,000 to the Victoria Memorial for the purchase of books on Art and these books were housed in the Connemara Public Library.

44 *Materials received under the Madras Public Libraries Act*

When it was made the State Central Library under the Madras Public Libraries Act, it began to receive four copies of publications published in the State and delivered to the Registrar of Books under the Press and Registration Act of 1867 as amended by the Madras Public Libraries Act. This increased the stock of library to some extent.

45 *Materials received under the Delivery of Books Act*

With the declaration of making the Connemara Public Library as one of the three libraries to receive all the books and other materials published in India with effect from September 10, 1955, the additions of the library grow very fast creating the problem of space to accommodate the materials.

46 *Materials from U.N.O., etc*

Apart from this, a good number of publications and periodicals of the U.N.Organisation and its specialised agencies and organs were received.

47 *Donated books*

In addition to these collections, the library is able to get a good number of books by way of donations from individuals, institutions and Governments.

48 *Purchased books*

Apart from these materials got gratis, a good number of books are added every year by purchasing from the funds made available by the Government of Madras.

491 *Rare books*

This library has got a good number of rare books and periodicals. Some of them are :—

Serial number (1)	*Year of publication* (2)	*Title* (3)	*Author* (4)
1	1608	The Bible	....
2	1678-1703	Hortus Indicus Malabaricus 12 Volumes ..	Rheed, etc.
3	1696	A voyage to Suratt in the year 1689	Ovington (J)
4	1711	An account of the Trade in India ..	Lockyer (Charles)

5	1717	An account of the religion and government, learning and economy, etc. of the Malabarians.	....
6	1768	Flora Indica	Burmanni (Nicolai Laverntii)
7	1813	Materia Medica of Hindoostan, etc.	Ainslie (Whitelaw)
8	1826	Memoirs of Zahir-Ed-Din Muhammad Baber..	Leyden (John); Erskins (William) Trs.
9	1882	Grammar of the High Dialect of the Tamil language.	Beschi (CJ)

492 *Stock*

The stock of volumes stood at 2,44,383 on 31—3—1973. At present it receives 6,000 periodicals and 280 newspapers.

493 *Classification*

In the earlier days, as the books were few, it was possible to have them arranged authorwise and serve the same to a few who frequented the library. But with increase in number of books as well as readers, the above arrangement was not helpful. Hence in 1928, it was decided to

classify books by subjects according to an improvised classification—Connemara classification—which divided the Universe of knowledge into 36 subjects as given below :—

4931 *Connemara Classification*

0	Generalia	18	Philosophy
1	General Science	19	Religion
2	Mathematics	20	Anthropology
3	Astronomy	21	Sociology
4	Meteorology	22	Economics
5	Administration	23	Politics
6	Engineering	24	Law
7	Physics	25	Education
8	Chemistry	26	Literature
9	Minerology	27	History
10	Geology	28	Geography
11	Natural History	29	Amusements
12	Botany	30	Fine Arts
13	Agriculture	31	Technology
14	Zoology	32	Museology
15	Medicine	33	Library Science
16	Pharmacognosy	34	Book Science
17	Archaeology	35	Biogiaphy

4932 *Analytico synthetic classification*

But as this is not devised on a scientific basis it is felt very difficult to cope up with fast developing knowledge. It is proposed to adopt a analytico-synthetic classification shortly.

494 *Cataloguing*

4941 *Author catalogue*

When the books were arranged authorwise, it was easy to have an author catalogue printed. The first volume was published in 1908 and four supplements upto the end of March, 1912. A revised author catalogue of the library was published in two volumes in 1931 and later the First supplementary author catologue of books was published in 1935. A catalogue of periodicals also was brought out in 1935.

4942 *Subject catalogue*

In addition to this a number of separate subject indexes were published between the years 1896 and 1900.

4943 *Classified catalogue*

But with the increasing number of books added every year the problem of printing the catalogue became difficult. The reclassification of books by subject and cataloguing of the same

necessitated the adoption of a card catalogue. This is maintained, since then, following the system of the Classified catalogue.

495 *Statues*

4951 *Cornwallis*—A beautiful white marble statue of Lord Cornwallis which had suffered from long exposure to the open air in Fort St. George was transferred to the Connemara Public Library in 1906-1907, remained in the northern wing up to 1950 and was shifted back to the For Museum.

4952 *Gandhi*—A bronze bust of Mahatma Gandhi in the act of addressing a prayer meeting was installed in 1952 near the entrance.

5 SERVICES

51 *Working hours and days*

It remains open to the public on all days for 9½ hours—from 8.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.—a day for 304 days except on Fridays and nine other holidays in a year. It may be of interest to note that the library is working on Sundays from 14th June 1896 to meet the wish of the literate classes who cannot get away from their work on week days.

52 *Reference*

For a pretty long period, it served only as a reference library for the Museum. The public were allowed slowly to make use of the scientific materials and other items of books and periodicals.

53 *Open access*

The open access system was introduced in 1930-31 by which any reader who wanted to see a book got the facility to see the same on the shelves themselves without waiting for somebody to locate and give for use. Electric installation was also provided.

54 *Lending*

It opened its loan counter from 1st January 1930 after providing all the necessary fittings and personnel to prevent the loss of books. Now the lending has become one of the important activities of the library.

55 *Home Delivery*

To suit the convenience of borrowers Home Delivery Service was introduced in 1931. But this was discontinued in 1932 for want of encouragement and personnel. However with effect from 16th June, 1962, it has been revived.

56 *Inter Library Loan*

A good number of libraries availed this facility once when they were not able to get the books they wanted from the local sources. However this facility is utilised still by the District Central Libraries and other institutions in the State.

57 *Visitors and Members*

The increasing intellectual awarness among the people make them to move towards the social institution like library.

571 *Visitors*

Any person above 17 years is eligible to use the free public library service. Accordingly 139,252 readers have utilised the facilities giving a daily average of 458—during 1972-73—whereas the maximum 894 readers have been recorded on Sunday the 17th December, 1972.

572 *Members*

Any person over 17 years of age who can deposit Rs. 20 with a guarantee can become a member to borrow books for home reading. Accordingly a wide representation of all sections of the society is found among our members. The total membership was 8,442 on 31st March 1973.

573 *Loan of Books*

1,17,736 volumes have been lent out to members for home reading giving a daily average of 387 volumes ; but it has shot up to 974 volumes on Sunday the 21st January, 1973. On an average, each member has borrowed 14 volumes a year during 1972-73.

58 *Books for Jawans*

The Connemara Public Library sent 7,500 volumes to the battle-front for the use of our Jawans during September-November, 1965.

59 *Record of Progress*

Year.	*Stock.*	*Members.*	*Readers.*	*Books Lent.*	*Expenditure.*
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1896-97 ..	..	Nil.	10,880	Nil	..
1950-51 ..	74,141	2,269	81,174	59,877	47,228
1955-56 ..	86,176	2,980	116,287	67,762	65,715
1960-61 ..	141,925	4,491	1,53,688	99,855	104,887
1965-66 ..	180,025	6,430	1,56,864	129,650	169,148
1970-71 ..	194,703	7,081	1,68,582	136,804	2,24,647
1972-73 ..	244,383	8,442	1,39,252	117,736	2,66,000

6 PUBLICATIONS

61 *Madras State Bibliography*

The Madras State Bibliography started in July 1964 to co-ordinate the Classification, cataloguing, Book selection, and Reference Service, etc., in the State is in progress. The annual cumulation for the years 1964 to 1966 are released. Other volumes are under print.

62 *Madras State Bibliography of Children's Literature*

The compilation of the Madras State Bibliography of Children's Literature in Tamil which was started in 1963 is in pr ogress to help the Libraries in the State in Classification, Cataloguing, Book selection and Reference Service. The Bibliography for the year 1963 and 1964 are released. The annual cumulation for other years are under print.

7 STAFF

71 *Yesterday*

The Connemara Public Library—which had three attendants (the first attendant as Head Librarian; Second attendant as Second Librarian; third attendant as Attendant) two peons and one sweeper or servant as the staff in its beginning had its first full time Librarian from 9th September 1929.

72 *Today*

Fifty-two persons (against the sanctioned strength of 62 persons) on 31-1-1973 including 3 graduates, 19 under-graduates (S.S.L.C. or Matriculation) and 30 persons of other category analysed by General Qualification and 1 Professional Juniors (*Diploma in Library Science*), 11 Semi professionals (Certificate in Library Science) and 10 non-professionals analysed by professional qualifications.

8 FINANCE

The above detailed free public library service through this library cost about Rs. 2,66,000 with an income of about Rs. 7,500 during 1972-73. This works out at Re. 0.49 per book used or Rs. 1.91 per reader used the library.

9 CONCLUSION

91 *Practical shape*

From the above, it can be seen that not only the objectives have been upheld, but also the basic principles included in the Unesco Manifesto for public libraries have been given a practical shape in the working of the library.

92 *Ambition*

Its ambition is to provide with facilities for research, information, aesthetic appreciation, recreation, vocational studies and education.

93 *Problems*

Like any other growing institution, it has its own problems; but these have arisen mainly from its popularity and continued success. Physical sources have not increased in direct proportion to the demand for our services. Some times it seems that it is not good to be too popular and too successful!

94 *Change*

Like a butterfly emerging from its cocoon, the Connemara Public Library has changed from a secluded place containing old books to one of the country's chief source of knowledge.